

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim 1 (currently amended) An ice fishing strainer assembly for removing ice particles from a pre-drilled ice fishing hole, said assembly comprising, in combination:
a body of cylindrical form having top and bottom ends and a midsection situated therebetween;

a strainer plate having a plurality of apertures extending therethrough to allow selective passage of water while affording capture of ice particles and a pair of connecting flanges diametrically positioned thereabout to serve as means for pivotally attaching said strainer plate to said body, said strainer plate comprising a pivot plate extending upwardly from a planer surface of said strainer plate; and

a support rod having an end portion substantially in the form a J-shaped hook extending through an aperture of said pivot plate and an upper end extending above and beyond said top end of said body to control ~~means for controlling~~ pivotal movement of said strainer plate housed within said body, particularly about the diametric positioning of said connecting flanges, said J-shaped hook being fixedly attached to said support rod by an outwardly extending arm extending a predetermined distance from and positioned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said support rod, collectively serving to limit the extent to which said strainer plate pivotally travels about said connecting flanges within said body insofar to prevent binding thereof upon said support rod being downwardly forced to close said strainer plate.

Claim 2 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of said connecting flanges extend outwardly from the outer periphery of said strainer plate, substantially being positioned perpendicular to a planer surface of said strainer plate, and fastened to said body by an equivalent number of fasteners.

Claim 3 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 1, wherein said strainer plate comprises a smaller outer diameter than the effective inner diameter of said body, collectively forming an annular space to permit unhindered rotational movement of said strainer plate and serve as supplemental means for passing

captured water downwardly beyond said bottom end upon lifting said body from the pre-drilled ice fishing hole.

Claim 4 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 1, further comprising a brace having a horizontal member situated in between and integrally connected to a pair of vertical support members each having ends affixed to said body, collectively establishing a handle situated above and beyond said top end, said horizontal member having an aperture extending therethrough to permit passage of a portion of said controlling means.

Claim 5 (currently amended) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 1, wherein said strainer plate ~~further comprises a pivot plate extending upwardly from a planer surface of said strainer plate for connecting thereto an end portion of~~ controlling means, support rod and body are collectively fabricated from a galvanized metal.

Claim 6 (currently amended) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 5 ~~1~~, wherein said ~~controlling means comprises a support rod having an end portion~~ substantially in the form a J-shaped hook extending through an aperture of said pivot plate and an upper end extending above and beyond said top end of said body strainer plate pivotally moves about said connecting flanges and travels to a maximum angular position of approximately 80° from an axis extending perpendicular to said body.

Claim 7 (cancelled) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 6, wherein said J-shaped hook is fixedly attached to said support rod by an outwardly extending arm extending a predetermined distance from and positioned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said support rod, collectively serving to limit the extent to which said strainer plate pivotally travels about said connecting flanges within said body insofar to prevent binding thereof upon said support rod being downwardly forced to close said strainer plate.

Claim 8 (cancelled) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 6, wherein said upper end comprises a lever having a vertical shaft comprising one end integrally connected to a shoulder member and an opposite end integrally connected to a

grip extending outwardly therefrom suitably serving as a location for handling and moving said support rod to control said strainer plate.

Claim 9 (currently amended) A method of separating ice particles from an ice-water mixture present in a pre-drilled ice fishing hole, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a body of cylindrical form having top and bottom ends and a midsection situated therebetween;

placing within said body a strainer plate having a plurality of apertures extending therethrough to allow selective passage of water while affording capture of ice particles and a pair of connecting flanges diametrically positioned thereabout and fastened to said body by an equivalent number of fasteners substantially capable of allowing pivotal movement of said strainer plate thereabout while housed within said body;

configuring within said body a support rod having an end portion substantially in the form a J-shaped hook to engage with a pivot plate extending upwardly from a planer surface of said strainer plate and an upper end extending above and beyond said top end of said body, said J-shaped hook being fixedly attached to said support rod by an outwardly extending arm extending a predetermined distance from and positioned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said support rod, collectively serving to limit the extent to which said strainer plate pivotally travels about said connecting flanges within said body insofar to prevent binding thereof upon said support rod being downwardly forced to close said strainer plate;

lifting upwardly on said support rod to open said strainer plate before placement within the pre-drilled ice fishing hole; and

allowing the ice-water mixture to flow upwardly past an angularly positioned strainer plate to fill said body at or above said midsection and pushing downwardly on said support rod to close said strainer plate for capture of ice particles.

Claim 10 (currently amended) A method as set forth in claim 9, wherein said ~~J-shaped hook is fixedly attached to said support rod by an outwardly extending arm extending a predetermined distance from and positioned perpendicular to the longitudinal~~

~~axis of said support rod, collectively serving to limit the extent to which said strainer plate pivotally travels about said connecting flanges within said body insofar to prevent binding thereof upon said support rod being downwardly forced to close said strainer plate~~ strainer plate is substantially positioned at said bottom end of said body.

Claim 11 (original) A method as set forth in claim 9, further comprising the step of attaching to said body a brace having a horizontal member situated in between and integrally connected to a pair of vertical support members each having ends affixed to said body, collectively establishing a handle situated above and beyond said top end.

Claim 12 (currently amended) An ice fishing strainer assembly for removing ice particles from a pre-drilled ice fishing hole, said assembly comprising, in combination:

a body of cylindrical form having top and bottom ends and a midsection situated therebetween;

a strainer plate having a plurality of apertures extending therethrough to allow selective passage of water while affording capture of ice particles and a pair of connecting flanges diametrically positioned thereabout and fastened to said body by an equivalent number of fasteners;

a brace having a horizontal member situated in between and integrally connected to a pair of vertical support members each having ends affixed to said body, collectively establishing a handle situated above and beyond said top end; and

a support rod having an end portion substantially in the form a J-shaped hook to engage with a pivot plate extending upwardly from a planer surface of said strainer plate and an upper end extending above and beyond said top end of said body and comprising a lever having a vertical shaft with one end integrally connected to a shoulder member and an opposite end integrally connected to a grip extending outwardly therefrom suitably serving as a location for handling and moving said support rod to control said strainer plate.

Claim 13 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said a horizontal member comprises an aperture to permit passage of said upper

end to optimally orientate said support rod about said body and above said strainer plate.

Claim 14 (cancelled) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said upper end comprises a lever having a vertical shaft comprising one end integrally connected to a shoulder member and an opposite end integrally connected to a grip extending outwardly therefrom suitably serving as a location for handling and moving said support rod to control said strainer plate.

Claim 15 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said strainer plate is substantially positioned at said bottom end of said body.

Claim 16 (cancelled) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said J-shaped hook is fixedly attached to said support rod by an outwardly extending arm extending a predetermined distance from and positioned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said support rod, collectively serving to limit the extent to which said strainer plate pivotally travels about said connecting flanges within said body insofar to prevent binding thereof upon said support rod being downwardly forced to close said strainer plate.

Claim 17 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said strainer plate pivotally moves about said connecting flanges and travels to a maximum angular position of approximately 80° from an axis extending perpendicular to said body.

Claim 18 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said strainer plate, brace, support rod and body are collectively fabricated from a galvanized metal.

Claim 19 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said top and bottom ends each comprise a hem extending circumferentially thereabout to eliminate the presence of a sharp edge.

Claim 20 (original) An ice fishing strainer assembly as set forth in claim 12, wherein said strainer plate comprises a smaller outer diameter than the effective inner diameter of said body, collectively forming an annular space to permit unhindered rotational movement of said strainer plate and serve as supplemental means for passing

captured water downwardly beyond said bottom end upon lifting said body from the pre-drilled ice fishing hole.

Claim 21 (new) An ice fishing strainer assembly for removing ice particles from a pre-drilled ice fishing hole, said assembly comprising, in combination:

a body of cylindrical form having top and bottom ends and a midsection situated therebetween;

a strainer plate having a plurality of apertures extending therethrough to allow selective passage of water while affording capture of ice particles and a pair of connecting flanges diametrically positioned thereabout to serve as means for pivotally attaching said strainer plate to said body, said strainer plate comprising a pivot plate extending upwardly therefrom; and

a support rod having an end portion substantially in the form a J-shaped hook extending through an aperture of said pivot plate and an upper end extending above and beyond said top end of said body and comprising a lever having a vertical shaft with one end integrally connected to a shoulder member and an opposite end integrally connected to a grip extending outwardly therefrom suitably serving as a location for handling and moving said support rod to control pivotal movement of said strainer plate housed within said body, particularly about the diametric positioning of said connecting flanges.

Claim 22 (new) An ice fishing strainer assembly for removing ice particles from a pre-drilled ice fishing hole, said assembly comprising, in combination:

a body of cylindrical form having top and bottom ends and a midsection situated therebetween;

a strainer plate having a plurality of apertures extending therethrough to allow selective passage of water while affording capture of ice particles and a pair of connecting flanges diametrically positioned thereabout and fastened to said body by an equivalent number of fasteners;

a brace having a horizontal member situated in between and integrally connected to a pair of vertical support members each having ends affixed to said body, collectively establishing a handle situated above and beyond said top end; and

a support rod having an end portion substantially in the form a J-shaped hook to engage with a pivot plate extending upwardly from a planer surface of said strainer plate and an upper end extending above and beyond said top end of said body, said J-shaped hook being fixedly attached to said support rod by an outwardly extending arm extending a predetermined distance from and positioned perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said support rod, collectively serving to limit the extent to which said strainer plate pivotally travels about said connecting flanges within said body insofar to prevent binding thereof upon said support rod being downwardly forced to close said strainer plate.